



## 2007 BULL TROUT REGULATIONS

Bull trout fishing is permitted in four western district waters of Montana: Hungry Horse Reservoir, South Fork Flathead River, Lake Koocanusa and Swan Lake. All other waters in Montana are closed to intentional fishing for bull trout. These four fisheries are very restrictive because bull trout are listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. See pages 2 and 3 for water-specific regulations. It is hoped that this permitted angling will increase public support for management of stable bull trout populations, restoration of bull trout habitat, and for other management activities that will increase the distribution and abundance of bull trout populations throughout the state.

### BULL TROUT CATCH CARD

A FWP bull trout permit included on your fishing license is required and must be in the angler's possession while intentionally fishing for bull trout in the mainstem South Fork Flathead River upstream of Hungry Horse Reservoir, Hungry Horse Reservoir and Lake Koocanusa. A valid bull trout Catch Card must be in possession to harvest bull trout from Hungry Horse Reservoir or Lake Koocanusa. A permit/catch card is not required for bull trout fishing on Swan Lake. Catch Cards will provide FWP with critical management information. Whether you fish for or harvest bull trout or not, your Catch Card(s) must be returned to FWP, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, MT. 59901, at the end of the applicable harvest season, or sooner if you no longer intend to fish for bull trout or your fishing license has expired. **Turning in your 2007 Catch Card(s) to FWP is a prerequisite for obtaining a 2008 Catch Card(s). You will not be able to obtain any 2008 Catch Card(s) unless you have turned in your 2007 Catch Card(s).**

Bull trout permits and Catch Cards are available at the FWP Region 1 office. Applications are available through the FWP Region One Office or online at [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov) for no charge. Your fishing license, with your bull trout permit, must be in possession at all times when fishing for bull trout. In addition, your catch card must be in possession during the authorized harvest season for Hungry Horse Reservoir and for Lake Koocanusa. You can help us better manage these fisheries by keeping accurate records while fishing for bull trout. Your catch card may not be transferred, borrowed, altered, or loaned to another person. **Duplicate cards will not be issued, so take good care of your bull trout catch card(s).**

**Immediately upon harvesting a bull trout, or if releasing a bull trout, you must record the following information in ballpoint pen on your catch card:**

- Zone (and water code for Hungry Horse/S. Fork Flathead catch cards)
- Length of bull trout to the nearest 1/2" (estimated length for fish caught-and-released)
- Month and day of harvest
- Cut out one notch for each bull trout harvested from Hungry Horse Reservoir or Lake Koocanusa. NOTE: Anglers are not allowed to harvest two bull trout on the same day.

### BULL TROUT SEASONS, LIMITS AND RESTRICTIONS

	Lake Koocanusa	Hungry Horse Res.	S. Fork Flathead River	Swan Lake
<b>Bull Trout Harvest</b>	Open June 1 through Feb. 29, 2008 - 2 bull trout per season, 1 per day.	Open 3rd Sat. in May through Aug. 15. - 2 bull trout per season, 1 per day.	No harvest allowed. Catch and release from the 3rd Sat. in May through Aug. 15 only.	Open all year. 1 daily and in possession. All bull trout must be released unharmed immediately, or killed and counted as your limit. No catch card required.
<b>Catch and Release</b>	Open entire year.	Open entire year.	Open 3rd Saturday in May through Aug. 15. All bull trout must be released unharmed immediately.	

NOTE: It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason. Valid Permit is required to fish for bull trout everywhere but Swan Lake.

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## SEASONS, LIMITS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR BULL TROUT

### Hungry Horse Reservoir

Wounded Buck Bay is closed to fishing for bull trout.

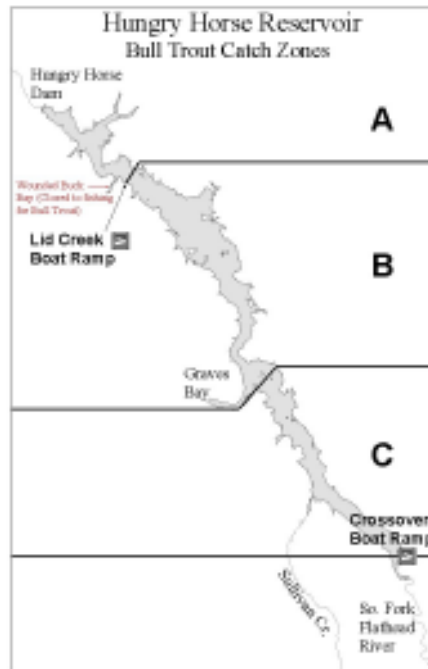
For purposes of this regulation, Hungry Horse Reservoir extends from Hungry Horse Dam south to the Forest Service Crossover boat ramp. The southern most boundary of the reservoir is a line extending due west from the Forest Service Crossover boat ramp. South of this line and upstream shall be considered the South Fork Flathead River.

#### Season/Limits:

One bull trout daily and in possession from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May through August 15<sup>th</sup>. A maximum of two per license year per angler may be taken from Hungry Horse Reservoir with a valid Catch Card. Only catch and release fishing for bull trout is allowed from August 16<sup>th</sup> through the third Friday in May with a current bull trout permit. A Hungry Horse Reservoir/South Fork Flathead bull trout permit must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit when harvest is allowed. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### Hungry Horse Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on catch card where bull trout was taken.



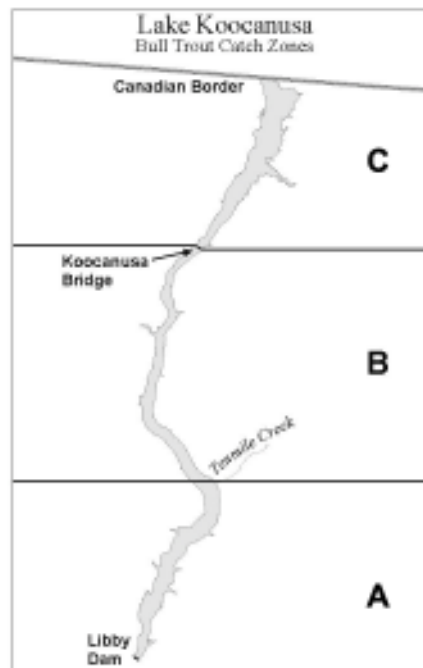
### Lake Koocanusa (Libby Reservoir)

#### Season/Limits:

One bull trout daily and in possession from June 1<sup>st</sup> through February 29<sup>th</sup>. A maximum of two per license year per angler may be taken from Lake Koocanusa. Catch and release only from March 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>. A current Lake Koocanusa Bull Trout Permit and Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit when harvest is allowed. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### Lake Koocanusa Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on Catch Card where bull trout was taken.



### South Fork Flathead River

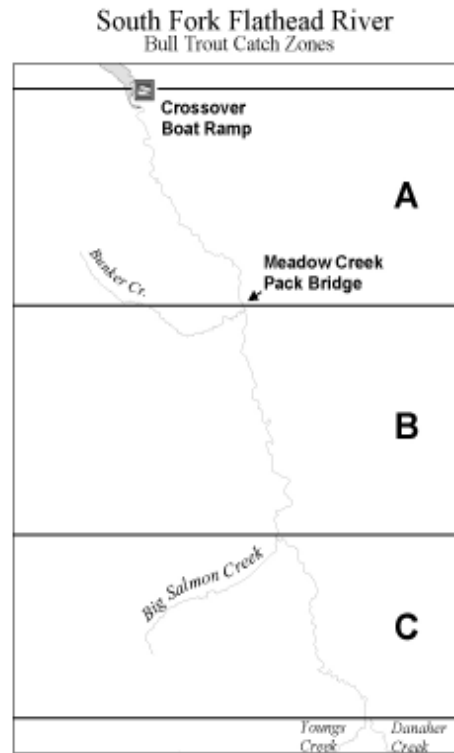
For purposes of this regulation, the South Fork Flathead River extends from Crossover boat ramp south and upstream to the confluence of Youngs' and Danaher creeks.

#### Season/Limits:

Catch and release fishing for bull trout from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May through August 15<sup>th</sup>. Closed to fishing for bull trout from August 16 through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in May. A current Hungry Horse/South Fork Flathead Bull Trout Catch Card must be in possession when fishing for bull trout. All bull trout must be released immediately. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

#### South Fork Flathead Catch Zones:

Identify zone (A, B, or C) on Catch Card where bull trout was taken.



### Swan Lake

One bull trout daily and in possession. All bull trout must be released immediately or killed and counted as your limit. It is unlawful to possess a live bull trout for any reason.

**Only a valid fishing license is required.**

## CATCH-AND-RELEASE FISHING

Use of proper handling techniques will improve the chance of survival for any fish released. A fish that is released may still die from deep hooking injury, internal organ damage from being squeezed, bacterial infections resulting from the handling process, effects of physical stress from being played too long, heat shock, or lack of oxygen from being held in warm or poorly oxygenated water.

#### Anglers can help fish survival by using the following techniques:

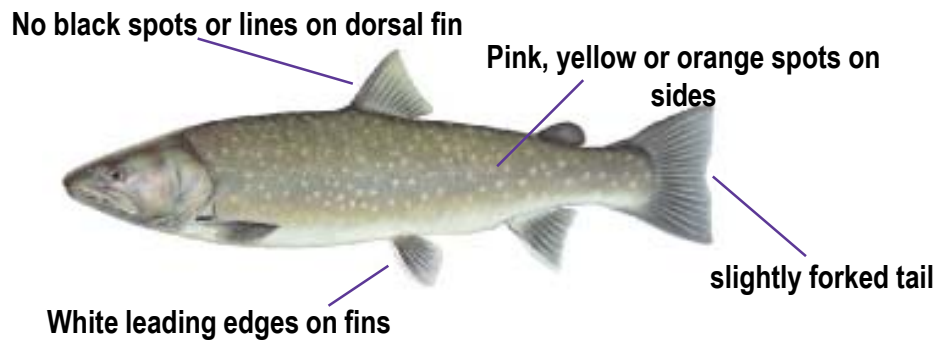
- Fish with artificial flies and lures with single, barbless hooks to reduce fish injury and handling time.
- Play the fish as rapidly as possible to minimize exhaustion.
- Keep the fish in water when handling and removing the hook. Needle-nose pliers or forceps are helpful.
- Remove the hook gently and do not squeeze the fish or place fingers in the gills.
- If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line leaving about 1" of leader hanging out of the mouth. Do not pull the hook out as this could seriously injure the fish; the hook will degrade rapidly and will not harm the fish.
- Release the fish only after it has gained equilibrium. If necessary, hold it in a swimming position facing into the current or water moving it slowly back and forth until it recovers.
- Release the fish in quiet water close to the area where it was caught.

## PHOTOGRAPHING BULL TROUT

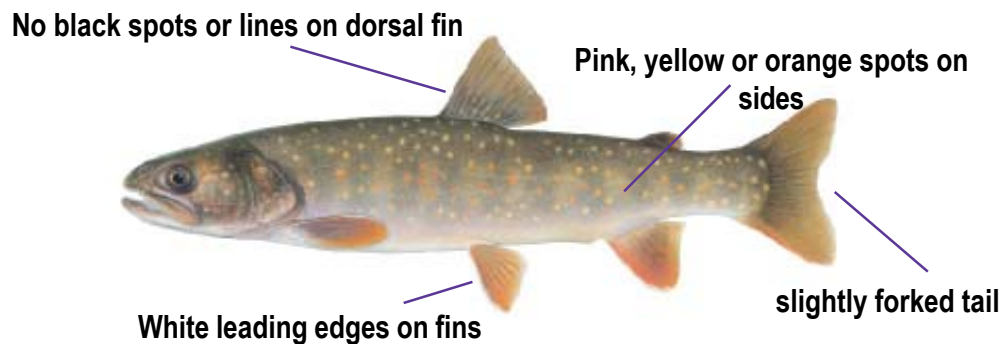
It is legal to photograph your trophy catch, however, it is essential that you minimize or eliminate the need to take the fish out of water. Have everything ready to take a photo before you handle the fish and try not to squeeze the fish or put your hands in its gills. Release the fish as quickly as possible.

# Bull Trout Identification Guide

## Adult fish, typically greater than 16"



## Juvenile fish, typically less than 16"



**Please Note:** Anglers that fail to properly validate their bull trout catch card, exceed the specified limits, violate the season restrictions, or possess a dead bull trout without a properly validated catch card, will be in violation of Montana fishing regulations and may also be prosecuted for violation of the Endangered Species Act.

**Remember:** take a ballpoint pen with you when you go fishing for bull trout.